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LETTER DATED 21 DECEMBER 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF RWANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you a response of the Government of Rwanda to the statement made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated to the members of the Security Council as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Manzi BAKURAMUTSA
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Annex

Response to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

In a press conference on 18 December 1995, the Secretary-General, when asked about the withdrawal of United Nations troops from Rwanda, is quoted as saying:

> "Concerning Rwanda, again the position is very clear. If a Government says that it does not want United Nations forces, you have two choices: either you pull out or you decide to maintain the forces on the basis of Chapter VII. Here is the problem. It is a very simple problem. The whole problem has now been postponed for a period of three months, but we know quite well that we have 2 million refugees in Goma and Bukavu and on the border of the United Republic of Tanzania. There is a crisis of confidence and the refugees do not want to return. Everybody is afraid that a new genocide may happen, this time not by the Hutu against the Tutsi but by the Tutsi against the Hutu."

My Government is seriously concerned by the Secretary-General's statement on the situation in Rwanda.

His statement has the impact of destroying the climate of confidence that the new Government of Rwanda had been working so hard - against all odds - to develop in a ravaged country. The Secretary-General's response can be interpreted as a lack of support for that Government even though his recent report seems to reflect a different position and portrays what was closer to the truth about developments inside Rwanda.

The first concern is his reference to the potential for the occurrence of another genocide in Rwanda. How can he suggest that one group of people in Rwanda has the potential to plan another genocide when that group has not been able to recover from repeated massacres and the worst genocide this century - especially since that group has received minimal support from the international community to help it to recover from the trauma of that crime? The impact of this statement undermines the Government of Rwanda by suggesting that there would be another genocide of Tutsi against Hutu.

The genocide in Rwanda was State-planned and State-sponsored. The new Government of Rwanda has demonstrated to the world that it has not established a State policy of revenge. Instead, it has pursued a policy of bringing the accused to justice. It has not killed the accused; it has imprisoned them as an interim measure as part of its policy to stop the cycle of impunity.

One month ago, the Government of Rwanda organized an international conference on the genocide in Rwanda. The purpose of the conference was to analyse what had occurred in Rwanda and to prevent the recurrence of that crime against humanity in Rwanda. The present Government's policies will never allow another genocide.

Our second concern is the Secretary-General's perception of the Security Council decision on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in resolution 1029 (1995). It was clear that that decision was a final renewal, not a postponement of the problem. Could it be his intention to recommend an extension of UNAMIR or propose the maintenance of UNAMIR on the basis of Chapter VII? How could that be contemplated in view of the sovereignty of Rwanda and the imperative to ensure the cooperation of the Government of Rwanda?

The third concern is the analysis of the situation in Rwanda by the Secretary-General which approximates the analysis used by the perpetrators of genocide and the countries that have supported them. That analysis promotes misinformation to the international community about such issues as the number of refugees - which was exaggerated in the press conference - and the true reason why the refugees are not returning. On the surface the defence of the refugees appears to be acceptable but there has been a tendency not to make a clear distinction between the innocent and those guilty of genocide. The tendency is to forget the reasons why some refugees would never want to return - because they have killed and they fear the hand of justice, while others do not return because of intimidation. Unless that distinction is made, the situation can never be properly analysed and can never be properly dealt with.

In that context, the Secretary-General continues to pursue a regional conference as a solution to the refugee crisis, which leads one to the question of what are the real objectives.

In general, there is a tendency to focus only on the refugees and forget the survivors and the victims of the horrible crime against humanity. There is strong silence on genocide.

One may wonder if the Secretary-General is intent on undermining the progress the Rwandan Government has made by making these public pronouncements, which could have the effect of destroying all such efforts by the Government of Rwanda.

The Secretary-General conceals the inability of the United Nations to assist the Government of Rwanda in addressing the problems faced by Rwanda, in particular the genocide, and the lack of success in stopping the intimidation in the refugee camps.

His statement has the potential to incite the refugees and cause them to question any advances made by the new broad-based Government in Rwanda, as well as to unsettle the Government's attempts at building a climate of peace and security.

Finally, the Secretariat's weak role in Rwanda is also reflected in slow progress in implementing the International Tribunal which was initially requested by the Government of Rwanda.

It would be mutually beneficial to the Secretariat, the United Nations as a whole and Rwanda if there was a more positive approach on the part of the United Nations and more cooperation with the present Government of Rwanda.